wherein upon actuation of the needle retainer, the biasing element displaces the needle rearwardly so that the sharpened tip of the needle is enclosed within the shield, wherein the shield is substantially puncture resistant wherein the axial force required to buckle the shield is less than the force necessary to puncture the shield with the needle to prevent inadvertent contact with the contaminated needle.

2. (Currently Amended) A method for infusing fluid into a patient with a medical device having a needle having a sharpened tip and a shield, comprising the steps of:
inserting the needle and shield into the patient;
retracting the needle into a shielded position such that the sharpened tip of the needle is disposed into the shield; and
infusing fluid through the shielded needle into the patient.

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3. (Previously Canceled)

4. (Previously Canceled)

5. (Currently Amended) A method for transfusing one of blood and plasma in or out of a patient with a medical device having a needle having a sharpened tip and a shield, comprising the steps of:
inserting the needle and the shield into the patient;
displacing the needle rearwardly into a shielded position such that the sharpened tip of the needle is disposed within the shield in the patient; and
transferring said one of blood and plasma through the shielded needle while a portion of the device is inserted in the patient.

6. (Previously Amended)
7. (Previously Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) A medical device, comprising:
a hollow housing;
a needle having a sharpened tip projecting forwardly from the housing;
a biasing element biasing the needle rearwardly;
a needle retainer releasably retaining the needle against the rearward bias of the biasing element;
a shield fixedly attached to the housing, projecting forwardly from the housing;
the shield being configured for insertion into a patient;
the shield sheathing the needle such that in the projecting position, the sharpened tip of the needle projects beyond the forward edge of the shield, and in the retracted position the sharpened tip is enclosed within the shield;
wherein upon actuation of the needle retainer, the biasing element displaces the needle rearwardly so that the sharpened tip of the needle is enclosed within the shield, wherein the shield is substantially puncture resistant wherein the axial force required to buckle the shield is less than the force necessary to puncture the shield with the needle to prevent inadvertent contact with the contaminated needle.

9. (Previously Added) The medical device of claim 8 comprising a lock for locking the needle in the retracted position to substantially permanently retain the needle against being re-extended into the projecting position.

10. (Previously Added) The medical device of claim 8 wherein the biasing element is a spring.

11. (Previously Added) The medical device of claim 8 comprising a connector in fluid communication with the needle for attaching a fluid device for fluid transfusion through the needle.

12. (Previously Added) The medical device of claim 8 comprising a stop operable to limit the rearward displacement of the needle, wherein the stop is positioned such that the displacement of the needle from the projecting position to the retracted position is less than the length of the shield.

13. (Previously Added) The medical device of claim 1 comprising a lock for locking the needle in the retracted position to substantially permanently retain the needle against being re-extended into the projecting position.

14. (Previously Added) The medical device of claim 1 wherein the biasing element is a spring.

15. (Previously Added) The medical device of claim 1 comprising a connector in fluid communication with the needle for attaching a fluid device for fluid transfusion through the needle.

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16. (Previously Added) The medical device of claim 1 comprising a stop operable to limit the rearward displacement of the needle, wherein the stop is positioned such that the displacement of the needle from the projecting position to the retracted position is less than the length of the shield.

17. (Previously Added) The method of claim 2 comprising the step of locking the needle in the shielded position to substantially permanently prevent the needle from being re-extended to re-expose the needle.

18. (Previously Added) The method of claim 2 wherein the step of retracting comprises retracting the needle such that the needle remains in the patient after retraction.

19. (Previously Added) The method of claim 5 comprising the step of locking the needle in the shielded position to substantially permanently prevent the